

News

United States
Department
of Labor



Bureau of Labor Statistics

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APRIL 2004 CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES FOR ENERGY, SHELTER, AND FOOD AT HOME DALLAS-FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Energy costs increased 3.6 percent in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area in April, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Food at home (grocery store) prices also rose during the month, up 0.2 percent, while the cost of shelter fell 0.4 percent. Acting Regional Commissioner Hal Corley noted that because these data are not adjusted for seasonal price variation, consumers and businesses should be cautious in drawing conclusions about long-term retail price trends from short-term changes in the Consumer Price Index.

The 3.6-percent advance in energy costs during April followed a 0.9-percent decline in March. Although prices were up in each of the three energy components, the biggest factor in the April increase was higher gasoline costs which rose 4.4 percent. Gasoline prices have risen in each month of 2004 after registering four consecutive monthly declines at the end of 2003. The gasoline index now stands at the highest point on record, up 13.2 percent during the last year. The average price for a gallon of gasoline in the Dallas-Fort Worth area was \$1.747 in April. The cost of utility (piped) gas service rose 11.1 percent in the latest month after dropping 23.4 percent in March. Despite the latest gain, natural gas prices were 32.0 percent below a year ago. Electricity costs registered the smallest monthly and yearly gain among the energy components, up 1.6 percent during April and 2.6 percent for the year. When combined, the varying annual rates within the energy grouping placed total energy costs 3.4 percent above their year-ago level.

Grocery prices advanced 0.2 percent in April after falling 1.2 percent in March. Higher prices for poultry, processed fish and seafood, cheese, and citrus fruits, more than offset lower prices for carbonated drinks, ham, beef roasts, and fresh vegetables. Over the year, grocery prices increased 4.5 percent, the sharpest annual rise since June 2002. The food at home index (CPI-U, 1982-84=100) for Dallas-Fort Worth stood at 166.6 in April meaning that a typical basket of grocery items priced at \$100.00 in 1982-84 cost area consumers \$166.60 last month.

Dallas-Fort Worth Energy, Shelter, and Food At Home CPIs – April 2004 (Continued)

Shelter costs fell 0.4 percent in April after advancing 1.2 percent in March. Declines have been registered in 8 of the last 12 months. The index for owners' equivalent rent decreased 0.3 percent and rent of a primary residence fell 0.2 percent during the latest month. A sharper decline in the cost of lodging away from home, specifically hotel and motel charges, contributed to the overall 0.4-percent decrease in the shelter index. Over the past 12 months, renters' costs fell 3.0 percent and homeowners' costs slipped 0.7 percent. The overall shelter index was 1.5 percent below the year-ago level.